

Camping growing in popularity at DNREC's Delaware State Parks

DOVER – Statistics show camping is gaining in popularity at DNREC's five state park campgrounds. So far in 2017, 5,658 visitors have camped for 2,391 nights in Delaware's five campground parks and Indian River Marina Cottages, an increase of 7 percent in camping nights over 2016. In addition, reservations in 2017 have been booked up to a year in advance.

"Camping in our state parks is an experience you won't forget," said DNREC Secretary Shawn M. Garvin. "Campers and visitors alike can enjoy our waterpark, canoeing, ziplining, horseback riding, our beautiful trails, and so much more. Our improved campgrounds also play a large role, especially for RVers. Delaware's state parks offer the best in camping – no wonder it is more popular than ever."

The increase in camping reservations, especially at Lums Pond and Cape Henlopen state parks was particularly noteworthy as more than \$6 million has been spent to upgrade the campgrounds to accommodate the needs of modern campers and address long standing infrastructure issues.

Campgrounds at the inland parks still have openings for camping this summer season, while at the beach parks, campgrounds are filling fast with 65 percent of the campsites already booked through Labor Day weekend – a sign that Delaware State Parks could see a record year of campers.

At Lums Pond, where three-point hook-ups were added in 2016, camping nights were up 400 percent this spring, in comparison to the past five years of camping stays for the same period. As the only campground in New Castle County and located just off the I-95 and Route 40 corridor, Lums Pond has become a

popular campground for RVers. The spacious sites feature new 50-amp electric service, water and sewer hook-ups.

After nearly eight months of construction, Cape Henlopen State Park showcased its campground improvements, including back-in, pull-through, and walk-in campsites; a new camp store; sites with 50 or 100 amp electric service and water hook-ups; a new playground; laundry area; and a paved one-way road system. Killens Pond and Trap Pond state parks' campgrounds also were renovated over the winter. Electric was upgraded to 50-amp service in several loops and restrooms were renovated. At Trap Pond's campground, a multi-year re-forestation effort is underway.

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